



KAGAMI

WINTER 2016-2017



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KOKUSAI NIPPON BUDO KAI
国際日本武道会

Welcome!

by Erik A. Johnstone, Doshi, Shindokan Budo Dojo, Kagami Editor

Hello and welcome to the Winter 2016-2017 Issue of Kagami! We have finally returned after a long but unintended hiatus. As such, I want to begin by offering my apologies for our absence and I want you to know that with this issue, we fully expect to resume a normal, quarterly publication schedule, as originally intended.

This past year marks the tenth year of the publication of Kagami. In that time, I have found that the Holiday/Winter issues tend to be the ones that I most look forward to preparing. Perhaps, coming at the time of year that it does, it is because the Holiday/Winter issues have often served as a year-end retrospective of significant events and moments for the KNBK and its members. Or perhaps it is simply because of the spirit of the time of year itself, and the feelings that arise with it for so many of us. In any case, I feel a deep sense of wholehearted connection and sharing with all of you as I write, edit, and search for the material that comprises this issue.

I think that it is safe to say that 2016 was yet another banner year for the KNBK, filled with many significant moments shared by many of us, on the training and off. With his rigorous teaching schedule, we had many opportunities to deepen our practice through training with Long Hanshi to avail ourselves of, and as we all know, participating in such events always serves to strengthen our bonds with our budo family. In this respect, it is no exaggeration to say that every year is a banner year for the KNBK. Based on some of the plans that Sensei has shared with us, it looks like 2017 will be another great year in that regard, so please take advantage of every opportunity that comes your way! That said, for many of us, the KNBK trip to Japan in April to participate in the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai World Butoku Sai in Kyoto was a high point of 2016. I know that I speak for all members of the KNBK Team when I say (in what is certainly an understatement of galactic proportion!) that it was an incredible, unforgettable experience. Although they cannot replace the direct experience itself, we have included a few articles and images in this issue that offer a small look into a few moments of that experience.

Before I tie this up, I want to take the opportunity here to remind everyone that March 1 is just around the corner. As we should all know by now, that is the deadline for dojo and individual membership renewals. Renewals can be completed online through a very easy and streamlined process via the DMS at <http://KNBK.org>, so please do not delay in getting it done. If you have any questions about the process, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor.

In closing, we hope that you enjoy this issue of Kagami, and while much of the content may no longer be news, it certainly offers a small glimpse of many of the important moments that we, the KNBK family, have shared together over the past year. I am sure that we all look forward to creating more memories together in 2017. And with that, I send wishes to all of you for blessings, joy, and prosperity in the New Year!



A New Year's Message

by Carl Long, Hanshi & KNBK Kaicho - Hombu Dojo

Hello and Happy New Year to everyone! I hope that 2017 is off to a great start for you all.

This year marks another significant milestone for the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, specifically the 10th anniversary of the founding of the KNBK. This year also brings with it many new opportunities for growth and progress for the KNBK and for each one of our members. With that in mind, there are many goals that I have for the KNBK this year, and we have much work to do to realise those goals. And so along with new opportunities, this new year also brings with it greater responsibilities, especially for Kodansha.

During the 2016 International Instructors Seminar at Hombu Dojo, we had an opportunity to learn more advanced sections of the curriculum of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho, particularly the Tsumeai no Kurai. It was the first time that most in attendance had ever been exposed to katachi beyond the Tachiuchi no Kurai. And there is so much more to learn; so much that most haven't even been exposed to yet - and we have only begun to scratch the surface. And so this brings me to my point about greater responsibility and the expectations that I have. At the Instructors Seminar, I stated there would be changes to the grading curriculum this year, particularly for Kodansha. Now that I feel that we are ready, it is essential that the higher portions of the Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu curriculum be transmitted and then practiced with great frequency. They must be learned, digested, internalized, and refined. And the best way to ensure that this happens is to require them for higher yudansha grades. However, such requirements are not material that is appropriate for open seminar. As such, I will reserve teaching this material to seminars at Hombu Dojo, with attendance based on eligibility. Therefore, those that want to reach further into the curriculum and to ensure eligibility for advancement to higher grade will be required to travel to Hombu Dojo for such training. This responsibility applies especially to Kodansha, for it is upon you who I rely to assist me in the correct transmission of our art to our KNBK family.

As I previously mentioned, 2017 marks the 10th anniversary of founding of the KNBK; it is a milestone that requires the coming together of our budo family for a special observance and celebration. As such, I am planning on holding a special KNBK Gasshuku in the fall of this year, which will likely follow a similar format to the 2015 Gasshuku in Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania. We are in the early planning stages, but it is likely to once again be held in November in northeastern Pennsylvania. Please be on the lookout for further information as it becomes available.

The 10th anniversary of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai represents a new era for our organization, our tradition, and for us as a budo family. It is time to boldly move forward into the future, to dig deeper into our tradition and uncover more of the treasures that it contains. We can only do so with great effort, but we certainly can do it together. So look forward to new opportunities to take part in that exploration, but please remember that the responsibility to take advantage of such opportunities and to contribute to the growth and progress of the KNBK lies with each one of you. I look forward to taking part in this journey with each one of you.

Sincerely,

Carl E. Long

KNBK Hombu
国際日本武道会
Sakura Budokan



Stranger in a Strange Land

Phil Fairbrother, Dojo-cho - Sakura Dojo of Lake Keowee

In my limited experience, I often marvel at how most things from a budo perspective can be distilled down to awareness and training.

This was my first trip to Japan, and what an all-out, full-bore experience it was. I arrived a week before the DNBK event with a group of fellow budo travelers. From my first-time point of view, Japan is a marvelous mixture of old and new - traditions and innovations. The country seems to have taken great pains to embrace technology while still holding onto the centuries of beliefs and traditions that define it.

And, like the dichotomies all around me, I was also embracing the vacation part of my trip (amazing sightseeing) with the business part of my trip (the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai 5th World Butoku Sai, held in Kyoto) because gracefully navigating different kinds of experiences sounds an awful lot like “yoyu” - being able to change in mid-technique, which is all a part of training.

Temples and shrines are everywhere and I quickly became aware that the cultural consciousness of Japan moves as single unit, with awareness of oneself and of one's surroundings being a key element. The famous temples are breathtaking in size and grandeur. I couldn't help but feel the spiritual connection that seems to tie all of us together. But, in the midst of this grandeur, I would also walk past a small two foot by two foot box of a shrine placed in the wall of a street or alleyway and realize that the same reverence lies within this small shrine as in the massive temples. It struck me that being aware of the large and small and the underlying reverence for all things is training too.

During the first week of my travels, I enjoyed getting very well acquainted with my teammates as we navigated the streets of Osaka and Kyoto and roomed as many as 16 of us in one small house. But then, being aware of the needs of the group as well as the needs of any individual - and comfortably finding your place in the mix - is training too.

Then came the week of the DNBK event itself which was our week of “business” after our week of vacation. It was a week that epitomized “ichigo ichie” - one encounter one chance. We were a large group that was always under observation. Observed by newer and less experienced participants as a model for how to act, and observed by our Japanese hosts to see how well we embraced the subtler aspects of budo training: move as a group, respond as a group, react as a group... and, of course, this is training too.

A personal highlight of the entire event was having the opportunity to train and demonstrate in the Butokuden, a place that has felt the footsteps of anybody that was anybody in the martial arts world in Japan for the last 150 years. Teachers in our lineage, from Oe Sensei all the way to the present, have stood on the same floor as I did; they all trained and demonstrated on the same floor and as

such left a little of their spirit for me to feel.

My experience at the Butokuden was only amplified by the presence of a member of the Imperial Family who, for the first time in generations, attended to observe the budo demonstrations. Here, our organization was at its best, moving as one through our waza demonstrating the power and grace of our individual budo as well as the combined power and grace of our group budo as we moved as a single unit...and this is training too.

As the event came to a close, the connections developed with the group, as well as the memories of companionship and love, were overwhelming. The gratitude for those who came before, those who teach now, and those who give of themselves to see these traditions continue are astounding... and, of course, this is training too.



The 2016 DNBK World Butoku Sai

Mike Johnston, Dojo-cho - KNBK of Corpus Christi/Seitokan Budo



As a preface to this article, I would like to thank some very important people who made the experience of the 2016 Dai Nippon Butoku Kai (DNBK) World Butoku Sai (WBS) possible. First, I would like to thank Tesshin Hamada Hanshi and the entire DNBK Hombu for hosting such a memorable event. I would also like to thank Kim Baylor Kyoshi and all of the members of Bushinkan Dojo; their tireless volunteer efforts leading up to and during the WBS made it possible for all attendees to experience a seamless event that seemed to run like clockwork. I would also like to thank Carl Long Hanshi, because without his commitment and dedication, no one from the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai (KNBK) team would have

been able to attend this remarkable event. Finally, I would like to acknowledge the sacrifices and effort that the KNBK team members made to attend the event to represent our teacher, lineage, and tradition.

With all the preparation that was required for an event of this magnitude, one could say that the 2016 World Butoku Sai actually began nearly a year before we all actually set foot in Japan this past April. And certainly, by the time the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai Team members and guests arrived in Kyoto, the 2016 WBS was already well underway. When we arrived at the Westin Miyako on the 24th of April to pick up our necessary event information, there was quite a bit of excitement buzzing around the hotel and many warm greetings with other members of the DNBK were exchanged. However, given that our arrival marked the beginning of the “business” portion of our stay in Japan, we checked in, took our bags and gear to our rooms, and then met for the first of many team meetings that would take place.

For some on the team, the many meetings and conversations on what to wear, when to show up, how to walk, where to stand, and how to dress were initially challenging. However, this would be a critical requirement if we were to get thirty-one individual team members to think and move as a single group, although it might not have been clear at the time. These were vitally important lessons, especially when it came time to get on busses, walking to and from the Butokuden, and how to enter the auxiliary gym and the Butokuden dojo. For me, the lessons in how to walk, when to talk, what to wear, how to enter a building, when and where to bow, and how to sit were reminiscent of what one would learn in the first few days of military basic training. I will call this lesson the “WBS Kata”; a lesson that would become far more important than we first realized.

The KNBK team walked one mile each morning and evening, before and after training, dressed in the required attire for seminar training at the Butokuden. Trying to get a large group of people from one place to another, dressed for the daily events ahead, on time and with no stragglers is no easy task, and the need for the WBS Kata became readily apparent very quickly.

The first official event of the WBS took place on Monday, the 25th of April. This was a ceremony in the Seiryuden at Shoren-in Temple, for the dedication of budo demonstrations in honor of the spiritual deity Ao Fudo Myoou, the Blue Cetaka, a Japanese National Treasure.

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The Seiryuden is located on top of a mountain overlooking Kyoto. When the ceremony was finished, everyone had an opportunity to take in the spectacular views of the city and take part in a DNBK group photo. We then boarded our tour bus and left Seiryuden, making our way to the Fushimi Inari Shrine. Upon arriving we all had a chance to browse the local shops leading to the Fushimi Inari Shrine from the bus parking lot and an opportunity to explore the shrine grounds. After a few hours we boarded the bus and headed back to our hotel.

The next day saw the beginning of budo training portions of the week, and with it another variation of the WBS Kata. We assembled dressed in keikogi and hakama with sword bags slung over our shoulders, and embarked on our first of many walks through the streets of Kyoto to the historic Butokuden. After a short walk, we arrived at the gates to the Butokuden. For those who have never seen it, the Butokuden is truly a magnificent structure. We bowed as we entered the grounds then proceeded to the Budo Center, the auxiliary gym facility that is frequently used for budo training in Kyoto. We found a place to put the team's gear and then head out to the floor in our group lines. After opening ceremonies and some opening remarks from Hamada Hanshi, we separated into various budo disciplines and began the morning training seminars. After lunch we separated again into groups for the various budo seminars lead by senior members of the DNBK Hombu and trained for the remainder of the day.

During his afternoon announcement to the group, Hamada Hanshi informed us that Her Imperial Highness Princess Akiko of Mikasa would be attending the WBS opening ceremonies, banquet, and budo demonstrations at the Butokuden. This was a significant announcement. It has been more than

70 years since an immediate member of the Imperial Family attended an event at the Butokuden. With the seminars for the day completed, we gathered up our gear and began the group walk back to our hotel to get ready for dinner.

The following day brought with it another opportunity to participate in budo seminars with senior teachers from various traditions within the the DNBK. After the morning budo seminars were completed, the entire DNBK International Division went through the required rehearsals for seating positions, demonstration sequences, how to receive awards, and protocols while in the Butokuden. Up until this point, the KNBK Team had not had an opportunity to practice our embu waza as a single group. However, with our day of seminar and protocol training complete, Long Sensei received permission for us to remain in the auxiliary gym to practice our team waza. We were able to practice our lineup, bowing sequences, and waza for about 40 to 45 minutes before we had to leave the gym. We didn't know it at the time, but that would be the only opportunity we would get to practice as a group before our formal embu at the WBS.

Thursday was a day of relaxation and sightseeing for the International Division. The KNBK team broke up into smaller groups and traveled around Kyoto taking in the many wonderful sites. A favorite option for many was to visit one or more of many of the temples and shrines within Kyoto's city limits, such as Kiyomizudera, one of most famous temples in Kyoto. Our leisure time passed by very quickly and before we knew it, our sight-seeing was over and it was time to meet back at the hotel for the opening ceremonies for the WBS and the formal dinner banquet.

The banquet was attended by Her Imperial Highness Princess



Akiko of Mikasa, DNBK Sosai, DNBK Hombu Delegation, the Mayor of Kyoto, various regional government officials, and the members of the DNBK International Division. Many letters of congratulations from dignitaries around the world were presented, including congratulatory letters from the Queen of England and the President of the United States; Princess Akiko of Mikasa and the DNBK Sosai also provided gracious and encouraging addresses to the attendees. An awards ceremony was conducted during dinner, with many DNBK members receiving very prestigious awards of recognition for their commitment to the DNBK and contributions to traditional budo. After the recognition ceremony, we were treated to an outstanding performance by a local traditional music group called Koma. It was a great finish to a great day!

The official budo demonstrations for the WBS took place on Friday. We dressed in montsuki and formal hakama for the day's events. After arriving at the Budo Center, we lined up to walk over to the Heian Shrine to attend a Shinto dedication ceremony for the 54th Japan Butoku Sai. After the dedication all the participants made their way back to the Butokuden, taking our assigned seating places on the tatami mats surrounding the main floor of the Butokuden for the start of the WBS embu. The demonstrations were led off by teams from the International Division, followed by a Japanese youth iaido team, and then the DNBK Japanese Division. Everyone, whether from Japan or the International Division, showed wholehearted commitment and budo spirit in their demonstrations of their particular school of budo.

One performance that delivered the message of what we should all want to attain in our budo came from the Deputy Sosai, Kuwahara Hanshi, a master of koryu jujutsu. At the advanced age of 94 he demonstrated jujutsu knife defenses, taking the role of uke. For a full five minutes, Kuwahara Hanshi executed attacks and took ukemi on the hardwood floor of the Butokuden dojo. After each waza, he rose from the floor with dignity, grace and humility; fixed his gi, faced his opponent and readied for another attack.

On Saturday, the 5th DNBK International Division World Rensei Taikai was held. As with the previous day, we assembled and took our designated places within the Butokuden and watched as Long Sensei beautifully performed Harai no Gi, an honno embu, serving as the opening of the day's demonstrations. After the final team budo demonstration and Osame no Gi was completed, we all lined up for a recognition ceremony and dojo cleaning. Upon the official closing of the Rensei Taikai, we walked back to our hotel to change for the farewell banquet and official diploma and recognition ceremony that would serve as the conclusion of the 2016 DNBK WBS.

With the WBS concluded, our day of departure had arrived. It was a very different morning from all those of the previous week. Because the need to function as one unit was behind us, the Kata of WBS that we worked so hard to perform correctly was no longer required. We were back in our roles as individuals, going about the tasks associated with checking out of the hotel, securing shipping for items purchased during the stay, and waiting for transportation to the train station or airport, or to other lodgings for those who would be staying in Japan for a longer visit.

Some things can only be truly appreciated and understood by experiencing them first hand and this article does little in the way of capturing the magnitude of the event that we had the great fortune to experience and to participate in. But the challenges, experiences, and camaraderie we all shared served to forge deeper bonds between all of us who were able participate, a direct result, as Long Sensei might say, of the “skinship” that grows through the rigours of training on the dojo floor as well as the experience of “eating the same dirt” when faced with difficulties. Hopefully, we will all internalise the important lessons and insights into the heart of traditional budo that were imparted to us during this unforgettable week, and actualise them in our lives as we grow as budoka together.



Clean Tabi

by Morgan Hooper - Shindokan Budo

This past April, I was fortunate to travel to Japan with the KNBK Team for the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai's 5th World Butoku Sai (WBS), held in Kyoto. This trip was a rich, invaluable experience for me, in which I participated in budo seminars, saw demonstrations from sensei in a gamut of traditions, and picked up an insight or two from some of these sensei. In my off-time, it was wonderful to be in shining Kyoto, truly abundant in its cultural treasures, and to share this time with the KNBK family, people for whom I have deep admiration and respect, and hope to train with again and again.

What's interesting for me whenever I travel to Japan is reflecting on the lessons I've learned. I suppose I imagine flying home with some secret waza, or feeling, in a general way, stronger and more confident in my technique; when, in fact, the change or shift is more internal, more subtle. Perhaps I'm not the only one returning home with this feeling.

During my stay, I went to Nijo-jo Castle, the famed fortress and Kyoto home of the Tokugawa Shogunate. In this grand structure, one of the main halls displays a recreation of a royal court scene. There one sees the emperor on a raised level in seiza, his page nearby holding his sword, and lower down some twenty lords, all richly garbed, their heads slightly bowed, as if holding rei perpetually. For some reason (I didn't fully understand why at the time) this scene stayed in my mind throughout the main events of the WBS. Then, entering the Butokuden, perhaps the oldest training hall in Japan (a place I had often hoped to visit one day; a place of pilgrimage you might say), it started to make sense.

The WBS, without a doubt, was the most prestigious and dignified martial arts event I have ever taken part in. With twenty-one international countries participating, an extensive guest list of Japanese dignitaries and officials, and recognition from the highest members of society, I began to feel like I was living in that scene at Nijo-jo. The stakes could not be higher. Anywhere I turned, I might have found Tokugawa Ieyasu staring me down. No wonder my sensei and sempai made such a fuss about my tabi being clean!

What was fascinating for me then was what the KNBK leadership placed emphasis on. In preparation for the enbu our team would perform, I spent hours going over the waza selection, only to discover (though still a critical component) it was not our highest training priority. In truth, we only spent about forty minutes as group reviewing the enbu list. By contrast, we drilled the protocol and formal elements for days. We covered everything: dress code, conduct, punctuality, etiquette, alertness and awareness of environment, and the

many subtleties of reiho (when to bow, where to bow, to what degree to bow). And all of this training was stressed with mindset of letting go of the individual and becoming a cohesive group.

During this process, I began to ask myself that question that sometimes paves the way to higher ground, and sometimes leads to a dead end: "Why?" Why so much emphasis on what I look like, and how I do this or that? At times, I saw the beauty and sincerity in this standard of being; for instance, beginning and ending mealtimes as one, as one mind; a single unit, a family. There were also moments in the Butokuden reminding me of those old black-and-white or sepia photographs of kenshi on dojo floors from a century or more ago, and I would think, "I'm doing it the way they did, I'm breathing where they breathed." But there were other times, too, times I felt the old ego fuming in the back corner. After all, as an average American, my day-to-day lifestyle is pretty casual. My idea of fancy dress is making sure there aren't taco stains on my t-shirt. And why should I go out of my way for someone's good opinion, anyway? So, why is all this important?



I take two insights away from this process. The first, when I carry myself with dignity, I honor not only myself, but everyone around me. I honor those of the past, the present, and those to come. The degree of respect I hold for myself and another is mutual and the same. There is no difference. Secondly, thinking of Nijo-jo Castle, I've begun to realize that as good as samurai had to be with a sword, he had to be even better at being a human being. Perhaps how he conducted himself, to what degree he bowed (to another but also within his heart), was the difference between the katana remaining in the scabbard and being drawn.

My heartfelt thanks to the KNBK sensei and members. If I understand correctly, Shimabukuro Sensei sometimes said something like, "This is a memory." And I have many memories now thanks to you. I would especially like to thank Long Sensei for his generosity, fearlessness, warmth and wisdom. Among the many masters I saw at the World Butoku Sai, for me, he is singular; and I hope to learn from him for a long to come.



The Butokuden and the KNBK

by Beau Straub - Happokaze Dojo



This past Spring, 29 members of the KNBK had the privilege of participating in the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai's 5th World Butoku Sai in Kyoto, Japan. As part of that, we had the honor of training and performing embu in the Butokuden, one of Japan's most historic martial arts training halls. The Butokuden is a place that many students of Japanese martial arts have heard of, yet few know of its history, one that reaches almost as far back in time as the city of Kyoto itself.

The year was 793 when Emperor Kanmu stood in the Higashiyama mountains and looked out over the valley below. It was a place where the light, wind, sounds, and scents of nature all seemed to harmonize. Kanmu decided that this would be the site of the grandest city his country had ever seen; it would be the new capital of Japan. Though today that city is known as Kyoto, it was originally called Heian-kyo, meaning "Peace and Tranquility Capital", and it would serve as Japan's capital for almost 1,000 years.

The very first "Hall of Martial Virtues", or Butokuden (武徳殿), was built right next to the new Greater Imperial Palace in Heian-kyo. It was meant to be a place for bushi to polish their martial skills and spirits; and indeed, renowned warriors from across the country came to showcase and sharpen their talents in horsemanship and archery, the arts of the military elites. Within a few short decades the Butokuden became the premier location for all martial arts training in Japan. As the bushi expanded and refined their study of warfare to include swords, spears, and naginata, training halls like the Butokuden became even more important. However, not all threats can be overcome with swords and bows.

Fire was a constant danger in old Japan, able to reduce the greatest monuments to ash with ease. Unfortunately, the wooden structures of the Greater Imperial Palace were no exception. Over the years, the palace buildings were frequently lost to flames and rebuilt until eventually none of the original construction, including the Butokuden, remained. Finally, in the summer of 1177, Kyoto suffered a devastating fire that ravaged the city and all but ruined the entire Imperial Palace. After that, the complex fell into disuse and within another 50 years it was completely abandoned. Yet the story of Kyoto's Butokuden doesn't end there.

Centuries later, in celebration of Kyoto's 1100th anniversary, the city built a reproduction of the old Imperial Palace complex,

and in March of 1895 it was dedicated as Heian Shrine. That same year, the Dai Nippon Butoku Kai was created to research and promote classical Japanese martial arts, so that those martial traditions could be passed onto future generations. For that purpose, a new Butokuden was built right next to Heian Shrine, not far from where the first one stood over a millennium ago.

The revived Butokuden was designed by Kyoto-born architect Matsumuro Shigemitsu as a traditional all-wooden structure built using the modern methods of the Meiji era. As soon as it was finished in 1899, the training hall became home to the DNBK's annual Butoku-sai, attracting the most talented martial artists in Japan, just as the original had eleven centuries before.

In the early 20th century, serving as the DNBK's elite "Martial Arts Professional School", or Budo Senmon Gakko (武道専門学校), the Butokuden saw many of the most famous names in kendo and judo study within its walls. Among those graduates was our 18th Generation headmaster, Masaoka Kazumi, who became an instructor at the school, receiving the title of Renshi, and eventually Kyoshi, in both kendo and iaido.

Many demonstrations were performed at the Butokuden by some of the most respected swordsmen of the time. One of the most important took place in May of 1919, when Oe Masamichi, 17th Generation headmaster of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu, gave a demonstration of Tosa Iai. It was because of Oe Sensei's inspiring performance on the floor of the Butokuden that iaido was added to the curriculum at the Budo Senmon Gakko. In light of that history and its relevance to our art and lineage, it was a particularly incredible, inspiring, and humbling experience to be part of the group demonstrating Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu on the same floor that Oe Sensei had nearly 100 years before.



From the Rock to Hombu Dojo

By Christopher Cortes, Sensei - Iaido Gibraltar



It's Wednesday, the 16th November at 7:30 am, and a black van makes its way around the Western and Southern sides of Gibraltar to pick up the Shidosha Koshukai participants, who have eagerly awaited this day for quite some time. Christopher Cortés' mind flashes back in time to a similar early morning 'silly o'clock' pick up, when Dylan Bocarisa had shared a wish to visit Hombu to train with Carl Long Hanshi. "Fire in the belly, ashes in the eyes," thought Cortés. No use, KNBK Kenkyukai Iaido Gibraltar were finally going to Hombu; Bocarisa's wish was coming true. Francis Buttigieg and his wife were now now on board and Country music was playing on the radio - cue chorus: "On the road again..." The three budoka chatted non-stop during the ensuing two-hour drive to the airport, their boyish grins giving away the excitement they were trying hard to conceal. Thankfully, the fourth member of the contingent, Mrs. Vielma (Buttigieg's wife), kept the boys on track and they arrived with enough time to register their Iaito with the Guardia Civil. Next stop: departure lounge at the airport in Malaga, Spain.

It was a relatively easy check-in. With the summer sun now far gone, Malaga Airport was quiet and subdued. Perhaps this made the Gibraltar team stand out a little more than usual? Nevertheless, after coffee, snacks, pre-packed sandwiches (courtesy of the Buttigieg's), some more snacks, friendly banter and a little window shopping,

the team managed to find their way to the boarding gate for the short three-hour flight to Zurich. The short transfer in Switzerland made it impossible to indulge in cheese and chocolate. However, extra security checks complete, the team settled into the Swissair transatlantic Airbus, which would see them safely across "the pond".

A routine yet relatively friendly Immigration check, car hire pickup, and the short drive from Newark to Wilkes-Barre (complete with jokes, laughter, a pit-stop, and more Country songs) got the team to their modest lodgings. It was only 12:30 am (EST), but as the team had been

travelling for nearly 24 hours, they welcomed the chance for a rest. With excited grins, they said goodnight as they all eagerly awaited the next day.

The short drive to Hombu soon allowed the team to meet old friends who were already there making preparations for the seminar. Long Hanshi's greeting was welcoming, warm, and kind. Buttigieg and Bocarisa had not seen Sensei since his last visit to Europe, so they were glad to be able to catch up in person. Once old KNBK friends were hugged and greeted, the team was introduced to KNBK members they had not yet had the pleasure of meeting.

So then the seminar: three days of Instructor Training, which, according to Cortés, Buttigieg, and Bocarisa, were as tough and informative as they were enjoyable - and they said the seminar was extremely enjoyable! Perhaps the best way to report on their experience at the Shidosha Koshukai is to list the moments, on and off the mat, most talked about by the team on their journey back home.

Firstly, the team was overjoyed at the privilege to learn directly from our Soshihan, Long Hanshi. Not only were they able to see, hear, interact with, and experience Sensei's teaching first hand, but they were also able to listen to answers to questions about certain aspects of technique, strategy, and philosophy



which only the 22nd generation headmaster could answer. In fact, Sensei's statements and explanations became the focus of many conversations between the team; some have even become sound bites used in the Dojo back on the Rock.

Secondly, the advantage of training with senior members of the KNBK meant that Cortés, Bocarisa, and Buttigieg were able to experience waza and paired drills differently. The Gibraltar Dojo is small in number, which often means members soon get used to training/fighting with each other. Working with new budoka not only developed the aptly named "skinship" with others, but also gave the team a chance to learn from more experienced martial artists: new partners who could teach them, test them, and help expand their limitations.

Thirdly, to see old techniques in a new light was one thing that amazed the team to no end. To revisit Batto-ho and Seiza Waza (under Sensei's watchful gaze) at a far higher level than they can on the Rock, helped the team see through new eyes. Bunkai was not just explained but also demonstrated. These demonstrations brought dry techniques back to life for the team and corrected the mistakes that had crept into their practice.

Fourthly, tatehiza, as practised in Tsumeai no Kurai, was a painful yet welcome progression of the team's training. After all, Long Sensei was showing them a part of the curriculum that the team had not yet seen; another side of the box revealed!

Finally, the opportunity for the team to compete against themselves and face the difficult experience of grading in front of the KNBK Exam Board, led by Long Hanshi himself, proved incredibly fulfilling. The latter was not just because of their new promotions: Bocarisa and Buttigieg to Shodan-ho and Cortés to Nidan and Fuku Shido-in, but also because of how the experience shaped them. When every sword swing counts, when the Exam Board is scrutinising your Budo, when more experienced budoka are standing for higher grades than you can imagine, when you have spent three days learning and many months preparing; and then, in one moment, it is all over - you have changed. Moreover, with that change (even though one convinces oneself that one already knew this) comes the realisation of how important Rei-ho and Sa-ho truly are.

There were other moments, on and off the mat, that will also stay with the team. For example the friendship, the conversations (some great advice from Robin Ramirez Shushi and Jeff Bishop Sensei), the sound nature of the KNBK family (their generosity, smiles, hugs), the good jokes, great food/sake, camaraderie, and everyone's sincerity. Furthermore, the international side of the organisation, which brought instructors and yudansha from all corners of the USA, as well as from Argentina, Aruba, Wales, and Gibraltar, proved to be meaningful to the team. Namely, that Seito Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu Iai Heiho might be 500 years old, but it is still relevant and much loved by so many wonderful people in the KNBK.



Dojo Spotlight: Bukonkai Dojo

By Jeffrey Bishop, Dojo-cho



This installment of the Dojo Spotlight takes us across the pond to the Bukonkai Dojo in Wales, that ancient land of Celtic Warrior-Poets with a strong reluctance for using vowels other than “Y”! - Editor

Bukonkai Dojo is located in the south of Wales in the town of Tonypany, in what used to be the heart of a coal mining community, about 20 miles north of the Welsh capital of Cardiff. The dojo was initially established as an Aikido dojo, but since 2012, we have also been practising Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho (Iaijutsu) under the direct tuition of Carl Long Hanshi, the 22nd Generation Soshihan.

I have been practicing martial arts since I was 9 years of age, beginning in around 1972 when I started training in Judo after seeing a demonstration at a local Fete. My Father insisted that it was a load of rubbish; he wanted me to be a boxer as he had been in the Military. However I pursued Judo for two years, followed by Karate-do for three years, followed by the practice of a number of different Chinese

martial arts. I took a break from martial arts around 1981 and worked overseas for a few years, but in 1983 I saw Aikido for the first time and my passion for the martial arts was reignited. I was fascinated by Aikido, I started training immediately and have never stopped since that day. I'm now teaching Aikido at the Dojo three days a week and I train at seminars each month held by the Welsh Aikido Society, an organization that governs Aikido and sponsors seminars in our part of the world.

It is through Aikido that my interest in the Japanese Sword came about. As I looked further into Japanese culture and history, I found myself continually drawn to the Japanese sword arts. My Aikido teacher at the time had said that his teacher taught him four basic Iaido waza from the Iaido Seitei-gata. I learnt and practised these waza, but it was not enough to quench my thirst for more; I knew that I wanted to learn a complete sword art. I bought books and studied old videos that I could find, but the United Kingdom (UK) seemed quite limited with regards to authentic Japanese sword arts. This was especially true in Wales, where they were almost entirely unknown. So I



continued to practise the Seitei-gata that I had been taught, and picked up the outer form of the other Waza from books. In 2006, I was fortunate enough to be invited to a budo seminar in Brussels, Belgium where I saw real laido. I knew then that I had to find a way to pursue authentic sword arts. In 2010, I was invited to an iaijutsu seminar in the UK which turned out to be a seminar in Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu conducted by a then Kyoshi, Carl Long. This would be the impetus for the founding of Bukonkai. At that seminar, I took the opportunity to speak to Long Sensei about pursuing training in Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu. As he seemed to respond warmly to my enthusiasm in the sword arts, I requested the opportunity to contact Sensei regarding further study of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu, a request that thankfully was granted.

Over the next two years I attended two more seminars in the UK that were conducted by Long Sensei. In July 2012 I officially joined the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai (KNBK), and in October jumped on a plane to Antwerp, Belgium to attend a four day seminar with Long Sensei. I had four whole days of intensive instruction covering a good range of the curriculum of our line of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu. Between the breadth and depth of curriculum, and the precision and effortless power with which Sensei Performed the waza, I'd never felt more lost in my life; this path seemed completely unattainable. Upon my return to Wales from the seminar, I practiced rigorously, even hiring a hall in order to secure a space in which I could properly practice on my own. I obtained all the media resources that were available, including the books "Samurai Swordsmanship" and "Flashing Steel", and the DVDs that Masayuki Shimabukuro Hanshi and Long Hanshi had made. I even found some DVDs made from the old Panther Video series that Shimabukuro Sensei did. Due to my geographic isolation, these resources were critical references for my training as they represented my only constant connection to the curriculum and principles of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu.

In 2013 I once again attended Antwerp for another four days of intensive training - and once again, felt totally lost! At the end of the seminar Long Sensei awarded the grade of Shodan-Ho to me with the words "keep training". Carrying those words as inspiration, I trained even harder upon my return home. I was soon joined by a friend from my Kendo days who was really interested in koryu sword arts, but like myself been unable to readily find a source of authentic instruction. Additionally, some of my Aikido students started to take an interest in the practice that I was devoting so much time to. With a number of students now training, Long Sensei granted us KNBK Study Group status and our dojo began to grow.



The name Bukonkai was established during Long Sensei's seminar in Kent, England in May 2014, the first KNBK seminar in the UK. The name can be accredited to Kako Lee Renshi; I believe we spent a whole evening scribbling notes on paper napkins (which I still have by the way). It was important to me that an element of "spirit" be included in the name of our dojo, in honour and recognition of the determination, grit, and spirit that defined the soul of the mining families that were once the backbone of this part of Wales. After much discussion, the name "Bukonkai" was decided on, which translates as "Martially Transmitted Spirit Group".

That first UK seminar was a memorable one. Although I'd been to a few seminars with Long Sensei at that point, I still felt completely lost. But Long Sensei was as supportive as ever, encouraging me, as well as my student who also attended, with the words "You've improved so much". However, this was followed by the dreaded words "I want you to test for Shodan in Antwerp in October".

Another KNBK experience that stands out for me was the 2015 KNBK Gasshuku at the Split Rock Resort in Lake Harmony, Pennsylvania that I attended along with another member of Bukonkai Dojo. There was an incredible 180 hours of training sessions available in various budo held over the course of three days. It was truly an unbelievable experience and I now understood what Sensei means when he says we are all family. I have been very fortunate to meet and grow close to so many wonderful fellow Budoka. At that event, I was honoured to receive a KNBK Pioneer Award from Long Sensei for establishing the first KNBK dojo in Wales. To cap that experience off, Sensei awarded me with the Fuku Shido-in licence just before I returned to the UK. This really brought home the importance of hard work and dedication for me, a message that I try to pass onto new students. I want them to know that if they are willing to work hard, they too can realize success and achieve goals, just as Sensei has shown me.

This past Spring, I attended the Fifth DNBK World Butoku Sai in Kyoto, Japan as a member of the KNBK Team in addition to representing Bukonkai and the UK. I had the privilege of demonstrating Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu along with Long Hanshi and fellow KNBK Members in front of members of Japan's Imperial Family and the DNBK Hombu Board, comprised of some of the senior-most budo teachers in Japan. The KNBK team lived, practiced, and demonstrated our art as one family, a single unit with all of us encouraging and looking out for one another. We put our individuality - even our nationality - aside for the benefit of the group, just striving to express our hearts and demonstrate our budo to the best of our ability. Numerous honours and awards were received by both our group, and individuals within the group; pointing to the hard work that each one of us put into preparing for, and comporting ourselves at, the WBS, both on and off the training floor. That experience was, and will certainly remain, one of the greatest of my life.

Since that time, we have continued to train at the dojo and travel to seminars and KNBK events to further our practice and understanding. We continue to learn and grow as best as we can. The dojo has even realised a little more growth this past year with the addition of new students. I invite you to visit our website at <http://www.bukonkai.com> to learn a bit more about us, and more importantly, I invite you to visit us in person should you ever find yourself in our wonderful little corner of the world.

Editor's note: Since the initial writing of this article, Bishop Sensei traveled to the KNBK Hombu Dojo in Kingston, Pennsylvania to take part in the 2016 KNBK Shidosha Koshukai. I had the good fortune to be paired with Bishop Sensei during our practice of the Tsumeai no Kurai. Moreover, Bishop Sensei successfully tested for the grade of Nidan in Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho.

Around the KNBK

In addition to providing a place space for general announcements, the purpose of this column is for KNBK dojo and members to share news and photos about localised KNBK-related events in which they participated. These can include, but are not necessarily limited to, public demonstrations, KNBK Hombu-authorized seminars and workshops, or individual dojo events. Please feel free to send us any news and photos that you might have so that we can share it with the rest of the KNBK!

Hombu Dojo Seminar Series: Shindo Muso-ryu Jojutsu



A special three-day intensive Jojutsu and Kenjutsu seminar was held at the KNBK Hombu Dojo from August 26th through the 28th, taught by Carl Long, Hanshi. Over the course of the seminar, Sensei provided exciting instruction in the Fukyugata set (a series of twelve kata from various sections of the koryu curriculum that serve as provide an overview of the Shindo Muso-ryu Jojutsu), the Omote set, and also the full set of Shinto-ryu Kenjutsu kata. It was a rigorous seminar, both physically and mentally, with Sensei pushing us to not only absorb all the material that was covered, but to also to deepen our understanding of the “hows and whys” of each kata. Testing for Shindo Muso-ryu grade was held on Sunday morning, with all candidates realising a successful effort.

A highlight of the weekend was the Saturday evening party and cookout that was held at Sensei’s house. While our training on the dojo floor is the forge for our growth in budo, it is very often our coming together in fellowship and celebration in which the bonds of our budo family are deepened and strengthened. Each time is an unforgettable and unrepeatable experience, and our time with Sensei and Mrs. Long at their home was certainly exemplary of that truth. They both took such good care of us all, warmly welcoming our budo family into their home to spend an evening of wonderful evening filled with good food and drink, fun, and camaraderie! Kako Lee Renshi provided us with a special treat by cooking okonomiyaki with supplies and ingredients that she brought with her for the occasion. It was fantastic, and for many of us, a very pleasant reminder of our trip to Japan earlier in the year! And as it had been Lee Sensei’s birthday a couple of days earlier, Sensei and Mrs. Long had a cake for her, although I am pretty sure that she didn’t expect to wind up wearing some of it on her face (with a little help, of course, from Sensei; sometimes, he just can’t contain himself!!)

All in all, it was yet another fantastic KNBK weekend, filled with hard training and wholehearted fellowship, both on and off the dojo floor. Skinship was deepened and more unforgettable memories were made.

Sensei intends to move forward with special training seminars at Hombu Dojo, with one already scheduled for May of this year (see the entry in Upcoming Seminar & Events) so please make every effort to take advantage of such these opportunities when they arise!



Long Hanshi in Westerly, Rhode Island

Carl Long, Hanshi, along with Bob Morris, Doshi, traveled to Westerly, Rhode Island for seminar over the weekend of October 15th and 16th, hosted by Shindokan Budo, with the support of our good friend, Michael Kiefer, Renshi, Shorin-ryu Karate-do, and Kiefer's Martial Arts. The seminar included training in various sections of the curriculum of Seito Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho as well as the kata of Shinto-ryu Kenjutsu. As is his way, Sensei pushed everyone to polish their skill and to deepen their insight into and understanding of Iai and Kenjutsu and to further refine their development as budoka. As is often the case, many of the most important opportunities for insight took place during discussions with Sensei off of the mat!



IMPORTANT NOTICE: KNBK Membership Renewals Due by March 1st

As mentioned earlier in this issue, KNBK Dojo and Individual Membership Renewals are due into Hombu Dojo by March 1st, 2017. The renewal process can be completed online through a very easy and streamlined process via the DMS at <http://KNBK.org>, so please do not delay in getting it done. Late fees will be applied for renewals completed after the deadline. Remember, your login name is the first letter of your first name combined with your family name, as in "ejohnstone". Unless you have created a new one, your password is your KNBK membership number. If you have any questions about the process, please do not hesitate to ask your instructor.

Upcoming Events and Seminars - 2017



Orlando Sword Seminar with Carl Long, Hanshi February 18 - 19, 2017 - Shindai Aikikai - Orlando, Florida

Shindai Aikikai is proud to welcome Carl Long, Hanshi, 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, back to Orlando for his annual winter visit to lead a long weekend of training in Muso Jikiden Eishin ryu Iai-Heiho (Iaijutsu). All are welcome to join us!

Location: Shindai Aikikai - Orlando, Florida
Contact: Gil Gillespie
Phone: 963-521-3775
Email: info@shindai.com

Pensacola Sword Arts Seminar with Carl Long, Hanshi March 10 - 12, 2017 - Big Green Drum Japanese Martial Arts - Pensacola, Florida

Carl Long, Hanshi 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, will be returning to Big Green Drum Japanese Martial Arts in sunny Pensacola, Florida to lead a weekend of training in Muso Jikiden Eishin ryu Iai-Heiho (Iaijutsu). All are welcome to join us!

Location: Big Green Drum Japanese Martial Arts - Pensacola, Florida
Contact: Patty Heath
Phone: 850-479-1907
Email: patty@aikidowestflorida.com

**New England Sword Arts Seminar with Carl Long, Hanshi
April 8 - 9, 2017 - Shindokan Budo - N. Stonington,
Connecticut//Westerly, Rhode Island**

Shindokan Budo is proud to once again host a visit by Carl Long, Hanshi, 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, for a weekend of intensive training in Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu, including waza and katachi from various sections of the curriculum and the principles and strategies underlying them. All are welcome!

Location: Shindokan Budo - N.Stonington, CT/Westerly, RI
Contact: Erik Johnstone, Doshi
Phone: 401-474-2568
Email: shindokan1@gmail.com

**Texas Sword Arts Seminar with Carl Long, Hanshi
April 28 - 30, 2017 - KNBK of Corpus Christi/
Seitokan Budo - Corpus Christi, Texas**

Seitokan Budo is proud to welcome Carl Long, Hanshi, 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai to the Gulf Coast of Texas for a weekend seminar! The training for the weekend will include Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho, as well as Shindo Muso-ryu Jojutsu. You are most welcome to join us!

Location: Seitokan Budo - Corpus Christi, TX
Contact: Mike Johnston, Sensei
Phone: 757-753-7575
Email: knbkofcorpuschristi@gmail.com

**KNBK Spring Regional Gasshuku 2017 with Carl Long, Hanshi
May 5 - 7, 2017 - Bakersfield Budo - Bakersfield, California**

Bakersfield Budo is honoured to host a return visit by Carl Long, Hanshi, 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai to lead a weekend Gasshuku this May, focusing on Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho as well as Shindo Muso-ryu Jojutsu. Sensei will be covering providing in-depth instruction in many components of the MJER curriculum, so please do not miss this event!

Location: Bakersfield Budo - Bakersfield, California
Contact: Robin Ramirez, Shushi
Phone: 661-398-2100
Email: r.ramirez@bakersfieldbudo.com

**KNBK Kodansha MJER Training
May 19 - 21, 2017 - KNBK Hombu Dojo/Sakura
Budokan - Kingston, Pennsylvania**

Carl Long, Hanshi, 22nd Generation Soshihan of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho and Kaicho of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, will be providing in-depth training for KNBK Kodansha (Sandan and above) in many areas of Muso Jikiden Eishin-ryu Iai-Heiho in this three-day intensive. This special seminar will include instruction in advanced catalogues of the MJER curriculum. The KNBK will be introducing revisions to the KNBK grading requirements this year, to include these advanced sections of the curriculum for Kodansha. Training in these requirements will typically only be available at Hombu Dojo, so it is the responsibility of all Kodansha to attend special training events such as this. If you are a KNBK MJER Kodansha, you should not miss this event! Additional information will be provided as we get closer to the event.

Location: KNBK Hombu Dojo/Sakura Budokan - Kingston, Pennsylvania
Contact: Carl E. Long, Hanshi
Phone: 570-788-7865
Email: hombu@knbk.org

**Upstate NY Sword Arts Seminar with Carl Long, Hanshi
June 10 - 11, 2017 - U.S. Budokai Karate - Clifton Park, New York**

Carl Long, Hanshi, will be returning to Upstate New York to lead a weekend of training in Muso Jikiden Eishin ryu Iai-Heiho (Iaijutsu), including waza and katachi from various sections of the curriculum and the principles and strategies underlying them. All are welcome to join us!

Location: U.S. Budokai Karate - Clifton Park, New York
Contact: Susan Warzek
Phone: 519-383-0484
Email: swarzek@gmail.com



Kagami Book

The Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai is pleased to offer *Kagami* by Masayuki Shimabukuro Hanshi. This book, available in a hardbound volume or as an eBook, is the collection of all articles by Shimabukuro Hanshi that appeared in Kagami from the first issue in 2006 through the summer of 2012. Now, they are all available in one volume. The production of these books was conceived of and spearheaded by Bob Morris Doshi of the JKI/KNBK Socal Dojo in San Diego, with the approval of Carl E. Long, Hanshi and Soshihan of the KNBK. The forward to the book was written by Erik Johnstone Doshi, Editor of Kagami: The Newsletter of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai, who collaborated on this series of articles with Shimabukuro Hanshi.

Long Hanshi recently offered the following comments regarding this collection:

“I cannot think of a better word to describe this collection of insights and prose. The word “Anthology” comes from the Medieval Latin “anthologia”, literally: a “flower gathering.” This collection of thoughts blossomed from the minds and practice of the Samurai Warrior traditions and have been preserved here in a collection of articles and wisdom imparted by a 21st SoShihan of the Muso Jikiden Eishin Ryu school of swordsmanship.

Wisdom is priceless.”

On behalf of Long Hanshi, Morris Doshi, and the KNBK, we are proud to offer “Kagami” to all of our members. The following links will allow you to preview and purchase the book:

- To preview and purchase the hardcover edition, please visit:

<http://blur.by/1aTtnYm>

- To preview and purchase the eBook, please visit:

<http://store.blurb.com/ebooks/453063-kagami>

We hope that you all enjoy this volume and benefit greatly from the teachings contained within its covers. Please join us in thanking Morris Doshi for his dedicated effort in making this book possible and Long Hanshi for his support. And we thank all of you for your support in the ongoing project that is Kagami.

CALL FOR SUBMISSIONS:

As ever, we at Kagami welcome and encourage the active involvement in and contributions to Kagami by all members of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai. Submissions could be in the form of articles, announcements, dojo and instructor profiles for the Dojo Spotlight section, event announcements and reports, appropriate media reviews, or photos and images.

Please feel free to send in materials at any time; we will do our best to include them in as early as possible, but we are also always happy to have a surplus of content, especially in the form of feature articles, photos, artwork, and Dojo Spotlight profiles (if your dojo has not yet been featured in Kagami, please feel free to send in a profile. Don't forget to include photos!). Kagami is YOUR publication, so please do not hesitate to contribute material. We can't do it without you.

Kagami: A Publication of the Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai

Advisor: Carl E. Long, Hanshi ; Kaicho & Soshihan
Kokusai Nippon Budo Kai

Editor-in-Chief: Erik A. Johnstone, Doshi

Assistant Editors: Robin McGuirl, Ryan Marston & Beau Straub

Graphic Design: Robin McGuirl



KNBK
KOKUSAI NIPPON BUDO KAI
国際日本武道会

Kagami Contact Information:

KNBK Hombu Dojo
Sakura Budokan
390 Tioga Ave.
Kingston, PA 18704 USA
Phone: 570-288-7865
Email: hombu@knbk.org
www.knbk.org

Erik Johnstone
Shindokan Dojo
829 Stonington Rd.
Stonington, CT 06378 USA
Phone: 401-474-2568
Email: shindokan1@gmail.com